

I did a very vicarly thing the sunny afternoon of the day I wrote this: I stayed in and studied the address given by the new Archbishop of Canterbury to the recent General Synod. Rivetting stuff. No, really, it was. Justin Welby, in so many words, said two main things. First, we live in an age that is economically, socially, culturally and politically revolutionary. Second, that the ministry of the Church (ALL its members) needs to wake up to these changes and reimagine its ministry accordingly.

These remarks included a context, the critical section reading, "In some things we change course and recognise the new context. Revolutions change culture. In others we stand firm because truth is not set by culture, nor morals by fashion. But let us be clear, pretending that nothing has changed is absurd and impossible." Elsewhere he refers to people looking for answers; not surprisingly he reminds us that we have good news for everyone. He even sees the work of God's Spirit in this revolutionary time, "...blowing through our structures and ideas and imagination."

Justin's answer to these circumstances? Prayer. Not any old mumbo-jumbo, though. Not words just rolled out by rote. Prayer that's honest. The contrasting prayers of lament (when we are angry or disappointed or seek justice) and celebration, whereby we are lifted and reminded that God's presence can be - and is - known here among us. From all this prayer comes hope, reconciliation, and the perception to know the answer God is giving us - and the courage to act on it.

God's answer? The gospel of Jesus The Christ is the good news that will satisfy the people of this revolutionary age. And guess who needs to deliver it. Not just me!

Well, it was a bit of a righteous time, thinking about all this, but Justin is right. As I looked at the clear sky this Swithun's Day, I knew a definite optimism in all things seen in God's light. So let's do it; start praying and good-newsing.

Funny word, "revolution," from a root meaning to roll back. So not destruction but restoration; restoration of all God's people.

*Read Archbishop Welby's full address for yourself:*

*<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5098/archbishop-justins-presidential-address-at-general-synod>*